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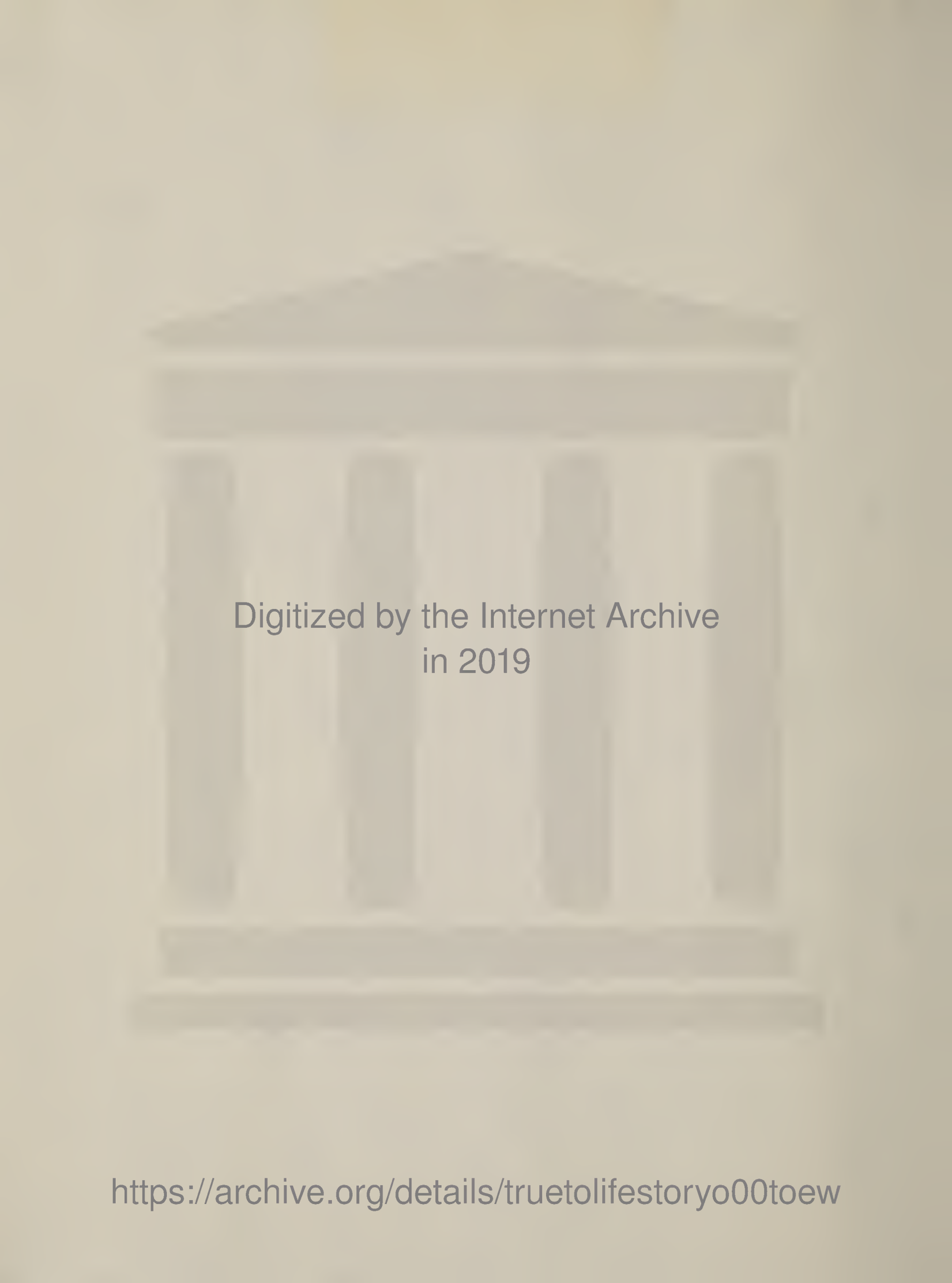
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The True to Life Story

of the

Wiens Family

of the

MENNONITE BIBLE MISSION

now

GRACE MENNONITE CHURCH

of Chicago

DEDICATED TO

PAPA AND MAMMA WIENS

Mary Wiens Toews

II Corinthians 12:15: I will gladly spend and be spent.....

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Toews

The true to life story of the Wiens family of the Mennonite Bible Mission

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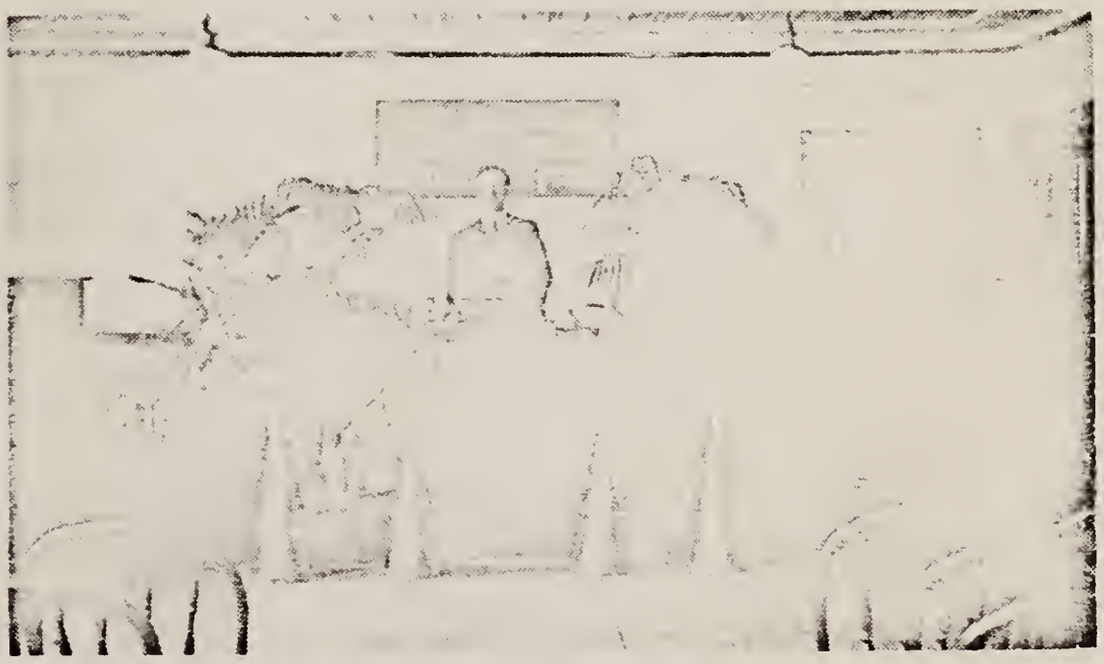
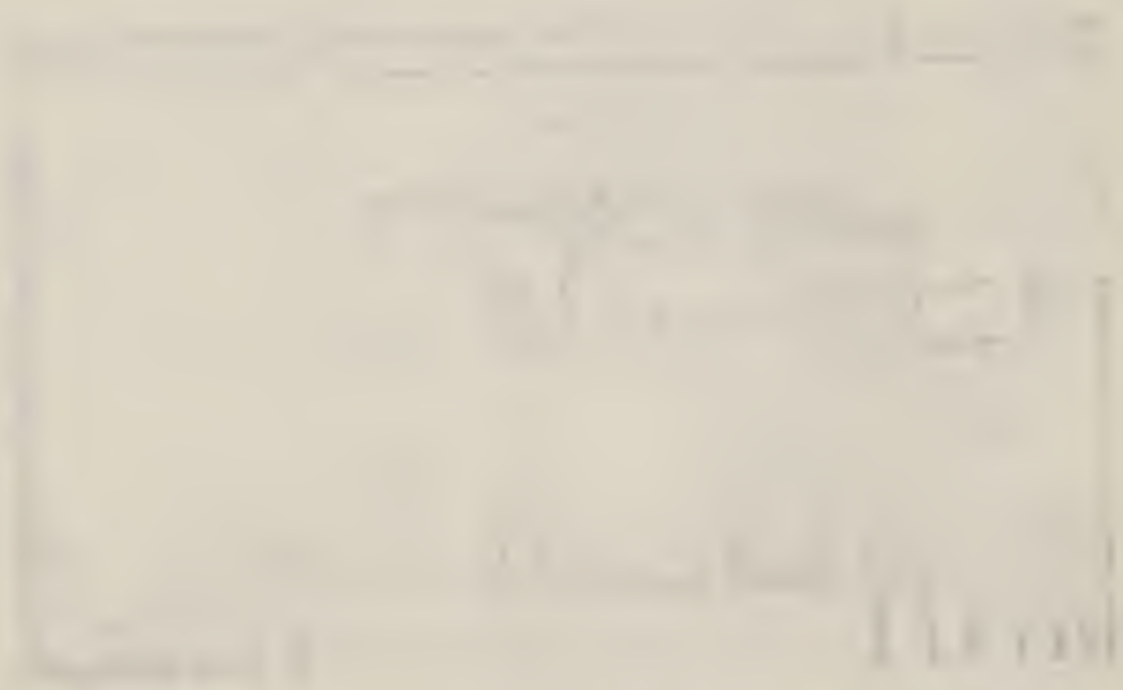
Proud Grandparents, Papa and Mamma Wiens

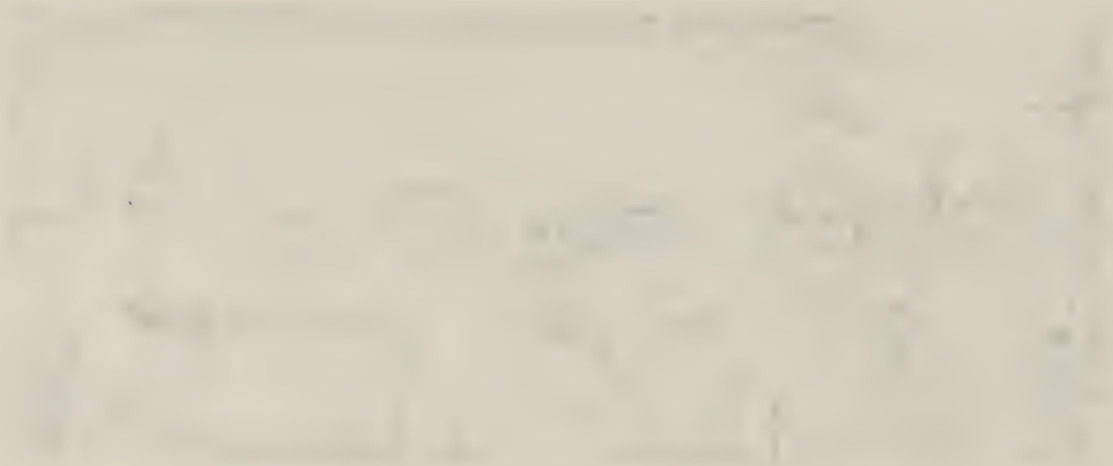


Rev. Wiens in the Mission in Chicago



Mamma Wiens with six of the daughters. This was taken in 1939, when the third daughter, Mary was in Africa

Esther, Sara Mae, Martha, Mamma Wiens, Katherine, Elizabeth, and Helene



FOR TWENTY YEARS

Full twenty years ago this year,
God sent His Messenger out here;
To preach the Gospel of His Grace,
To all the people of this place.
Have you responded yet?
Through Sermon and through Sunday School,
On every Sunday, as a rule;
The message of God's gracious love,
Was sent to you from heav'n above.
Have you received it yet?
Through Scripture freely given out,
In church, in homes, and all about;
The message of His peace to men,
Has freely flowed from press and pen.
Have you received this peace?
From house to house, your servant went;
As by His Master he was sent:
With this gracious invitation,
"Come to Christ for full salvation".
Have you accepted this?
For twenty years, he went around,
To visit homes where sick were found;
With words of comfort and with prayer,
Always ready their griefs to share.
Have you submitted yet?
Through many helpers, young and old,
The story of the cross was told.
Full salvation was promised free;
By Christ's own blood, for you and me.
And you are waiting yet?
If Christ should come this very day,
Would you be happy on the way;
To meet the Saviour face to face,
And all the saints from every race?
Have you assurance yet?
For Many Years you had your choice,
To take the Saviour and rejoice.

To live a life of happiness
And then receive eternal bliss.
Would you reject Him yet?

—J. T. Neufeld

(In memory of Rev. A. F. Wiens.) Rev. Wiens had been at the Bible Mission for twenty years, but he had started his Mission work in 1906.

SPENT FOR CHRIST

It was the day that I heard of my mother's death that I started to write the story of the Wiens family of the Menn. Bible Mission in Chicago.

Early that morning, in the Belgian Congo, we heard a car approaching Lac Madimape where our family was spending their vacation. A breakfast was hastily prepared for the group of missionaries that was on its way to Port Franque to take Mr. and Mrs. Archie Graber to the River Steamer. Little did we know then that that was to be the last time that we were to see Mrs. A. Graber, and little did we know of the telegram which they had come to bring to us, regarding my mother's death.

After breakfast, the group left by car to resume their journey to Port Franque. As they were leaving they handed us a packet of letters. We returned to the cottage facing the beautiful lake and seated ourselves to enjoy our mail from "putu" (America). It was not long before we spied the telegram which brought the news—the sad tidings of my mother's home going. The date of the funeral showed that less than a week had passed since she had been laid to rest at Fairmont Cemetery, just outside of the limits of Chicago, where had been her Mission Field. Yes, mother had served her Lord enthusiastically and fervently along side of her husband, our father, who had passed on to his reward about nine years earlier. Their seven daughters too heard God's call to Christian service and missionary work in various parts of the world.

It was late in the last century, that a young couple, Mr. and Mrs. Wiens settled in the Mennonite community in Texas.

Here the family was prospering quite well financially, but simultaneously both father and mother felt the call to Mission work, however no definite decision was made at that time. A little daughter, Katherine, made her appearance in this home.

Sometime later a cyclone struck the little Mennonite Community. Mother told us about the anxiety of the long night as their little house was demolished and the little family narrowly escaped with their lives. A large stone had fallen near father but he was uninjured. When the terrible storm had subsided they had tried to help others who were in worse condition than they. They soon learned that grandmother had been killed in the storm as well as others in the Menn. settlement. Their cattle and horses were practically all killed and their supplies were lost in the storm.

As far as we can learn, this was the Galveston Storm of 1900, which is recorded in the Encyclopedia as following— In 1900 a West Indies hurricane blowing steadily for eighteen hours, reaching a velocity of 135 mi. per hour, piled up enormous waves which swept across most of the City, About 5000 lives were lost and property loss was $17,000,000.

Our parents felt that now was the time to cut loose and prepare for the Mission Work for which they felt the call. Most of their belongings had already been disposed of by the Storm. So they sold their property and left for Kansas where they attended school. Father had come from Russia just a few years previously, in 1897, so he had not mastered the English language yet. He also studied at McPherson College.

It was in 1906 that the family made its appearance in Chicago. There were now three little tots. Lieze had been born after the Storm in Texas, and Mary had been born while the family was in Kansas. Rev. A. H. Lehman helped the family in finding a temporary location on Lowe Ave., The Home Mission of the Old Mennonites had already been started by Rev. Lehman. Here, father assisted in the work in the beginning, in order to become acquainted with the work which was already being done by the Mennonites. He also assisted in the opening of the 62nd Street Mission. There was considerable antagonism in the community toward the later Mission and the workers found it very difficult to go forward with the work.

The temporary location of the Wiens family was rather

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ill chosen. It was above a tavern or liquor parlor. After dark, the occupants of the lower stories would sometimes venture upstairs and try to disturb the peace of the little family from the West. It didn't take much to disturb the timid group, especially if there were drunkards on the stairway. There was no convenient place for the children to play, and they were often too timid to play in front of the house. Often they would run in terror from real or imaginary dangers. They could not speak English fluently so that added to their discomfort and embarrasment. One night Papa Wiens came home with a bloody nose. Mother Wiens and the three little Wienses, now Tinie, Lieze and Mary, were all waiting for the return of Papa Wiens. There was a knock at the door and there stood Papa Wiens holding his nose. Someone had encountered him in the street below and had punched his nose so that the bone was broken. For years afterward he had trouble with his nose. Father thought that he had been mistaken for someone else who was assisting in the opening of the Mission at 62nd Street.

Later, the Conference (Evangelical Menn. Brethren) decided on a more permanent location at 34th Street and Hoyne Ave., but this property was only rented. This had formerly been a store and so there was a hall in front, with living quarters at the rear. Services for the public were soon started and Sunday School was opened. Among those who attended services were the rowdies or bums of the neighborhood. To cause some excitement and disturbance they would act ridiculously. A certain lady enjoyed bringing a can of corks to the service and aiming them at the speaker of the evening. Some of those who helped in the services were threatened on their homeward journey.

Tinie and Lieze started to attend public school, at the Everet School. They were both put into the first grade though Tinie was quite a bit older. Tinie often found it necessary to coach Lieze on her English. One day the teacher told the pupils to draw an engine, but Lieze understood angel, so Tinie had to whisper to her and to correct her. For this Tinie was punished by the teacher. However, it was not long before the teacher found that the little sisters were really very apt students.

Some time later, a location was rented at 35th Street and Oakley Ave. Here there was room for a garden and chickens.

It was found that others were benefiting by the eggs which our hens were laying. At certain times our vegetables too were enjoyed by others. Flowers grew so plentifully that at certain times small bouquets were given to the Sunday School children. The neighbor to the Mission was a Police Officer. He was asked to help in finding out just what was happening to the eggs which the chickens had laid. One Sunday he watched while services were in session. He saw a boy emerging from our chicken barn. He was carrying his hat in his hand instead of wearing it on his head. The Police Officer suggested that the fellow put his cap on his head. With difficulty he tried to keep secret the contents of his cap and still attempt to put it on his head. The Officer gently or otherwise assisted him and the contents came streaming down his face. The thief had been found.

By this time the family had increased so that the girls numbered five. Martha and Helene had been added. Their names for short were March and Lena or Lunch. Mary had started to attend the Everet School on Irving and 33rd Street. After school hours were spent in playing with the younger sisters. The large barn at the rear of the lot lent itself to having a large rope swing to which the public was not invited, and it was also ideal for playing house and school. The second story lent itself to hide and seek games.

The work at the Mission made considerable progress during these years. The Sunday School was thriving. There was a group of young people for the choir. Mr. J. P. Barkman, who later became a Missionary to Africa, was choir leader. Some of the tender hearted ladies wept tears over his criticisms, at choir practice. Mother Wiens visited the parents of the Sunday School children so that many of the parents were also becoming interested. Misses Sara Kroeker and Katie Schmidt were assisting in the work. They also spent much time visiting families in the neighborhood. They also took courses in nursing while they were helping in the work. Miss Sarah Kroeker, a sister to Mother Wiens, later went out under the C. I. M., as one of its earliest Missionaries.

Miss Kroeker went to England first and studied nursing and in 1912 went to Congo. She arrived on the field when Mr. Stevenson, the initial missionary, was critically ill. She nursed him while he was ill with T. B. Upon his death she inherited his shoes. All of her shoes had been stolen from her orders

as they came up River. Later, when Oscar Anderson made his appearance at the Kasai River in Congo, she went down to meet the Steamer. Miss Kroeker wore these mannish shoes, but Rev. O. Anderson said that it was love at first sight in spite of the manly shoes.

It was at this 35th Street location that a number of families became interested in the Mission. There were the three Baker sisters who made a profession of accepting Christ. They became teachers in the Sunday School. The entire Kreft family became interested and all of them united with the Church. There were the Olson girls and the Kapriva sisters. The Schroeder boys also started to come to Sunday School. Their parents were given to spending their evenings in liquor parlors and on dance floors. The children were often left home alone and were often ill-cared for. Due to reports from the children, the parents started to attend the services and they were both gloriously saved. They found great joy in testifying to the Grace of God that had wrought such a great change in their lives. For years afterward, Mrs. Schroeder was a faithful Sunday School teacher and worker. She was especially effective as a speaker in Open Air Meetings. She has already gone to her reward at this writing. Some of her children are still faithful to the Church.

About this time the Menn. Conference bought property at 34th and Oakly Ave. (the place in which the G. P. Schultz family now resides.) The services were held in the hall in front on the main floor, and the Wiens family lived in the rooms at the rear. In the attic upstairs temporary rooms were fixed for bedrooms for the girls, who numbered five. They were known as Tine, Lieze, Mary, March and Lunch. Large sheets were used as partitions between the rooms. Large sheets also were used to hide the hideous unfinished walls. The movements of these moveable walls, when the breezes blew, caused much hidden fear in the hearts of the little girls.

The hall proved to be too small for the Sunday School so in time the building was remodeled so that the family lived in the basement which had been raised enough to make suitable living quarters for the family. The two lady workers, Miss Eva Enns and Miss Katie Schmidt continued to live in a room prepared in the attic. Thus the whole main floor was used for Mission purposes. There was a second hand organ in the Chapel on which Elizabeth practiced her music lessons. Mary

would often go upstairs with her and sit in the unheated Chapel while the older sister practiced her lesson.

The Windt and Hurlbut families also became interested in the Mission. Harriet became the organist and played for the services before Elizabeth became efficient enough to perform that duty. Elmer Windt played the violin and assisted with the Young People's work.

It was shortly before the Mission was remodeled that the family had suspicions of fruit disappearing from the dark old basement. Mother Wiens always canned quarts upon quarts of fruit and vegetables for her ever increasing family. Even in the City it was possible to get bargains in fruit and then the girls would assist mother in her canning. These jars were safely stored in the dark basement. One evening Katherine, as she was later called, went to the basement to get a jar of fruit. It was Sunday evening, and as she went to the basement she noticed a flicker of light. She hurried back in her fright and soon father had set some one on to watch the back door and the search was started for the thief. Jars had been disappearing for some time, and other times empty jars had been found in places where filled jars had been. Upon looking at the door it was found that the screw had been removed in the lock, so it was not just imagination that Katherine had seen the light. But the thief could not be found. The small windows were closed so he had not escaped there. It was about time for the evening service to begin and the thief had not turned up. Some old doors were set on the side quite close together. Someone suggested that they look again between those doors and sure enough there—far down between those doors was the dark figure of a man. When he finally got up he was no stranger, but one of the men who sometimes attended the services. He claimed that he had stolen the fruit because he was hungry. He was admonished by the brethren and then released.

Miss Matilda Stucky, a sweet little lady from Indiana, came to assist in the work of the Mission. One day Rev. J. P. Barkman, our song leader, was seen carrying her valise and then we learned that she was soon to accompany Rev. Barkman to Africa.

Two sisters were born to the Wiens family at the Oakley Ave., location. Sarah was born just the night before Aunt Sarah left for the Mission field in Africa. Of course she had

to be named Sarah. The sisters wanted her to be called May because she was born in May. Later the names Lilly and Matilda were added to her list so her name read, Sarah Mae Lilly Matilda Wiens. Lilly was the name which she herself chose later and Matilda was added because of the sweet little lady from Indiana who married Mr. Barkman.

Esther, the baby of the family was born in 1915, December 6. She was the seventh girl and then father said that the number of children was complete. Esther was a very pleasant pretty child. Her second name was Agnes, named after her Grandmother on father's side. Mother had seven daughters. She said that her ambition had been to raise preachers, but instead God had intrusted to her care the duty of rearing preachers' wives. Upon mother's death, all who had married had married either ministers or missionaries.

The older sisters decided to revise or improve their names. Tinie became the dignified Katherine. Lieze had already become Elizabeth, Mary was lengthened to Mary Jane, March became Martha Rachel, Lunch became Helene Rebecca, and Sarah already had enough flourishes in her name. Ella Baker, one of the young ladies who often spent her evenings with the family, playfully called them Papa Wiens and Mamma Wiens and seven little Wienses and how they grew on "plume moose and borscht." She as well as some of the other church attendants enjoyed sampling the dishes of this Mennonite family. Often after church they would ask whether there was any "plume moose" on hand and if so it would soon be finished by the young folks.

Other families who were much interested in the Mission work, in fact were trophies of the work, were the Davis family, Mr. and Mrs. Corie Smith and Lottie Languash. Miss Languash later became Mrs. Denison, and she and her husband and family are still prominent in the work of the Brighton Mission Chapel—the location to which the work of the Menn. Mission moved next. Miss Katie Ratzlaff was also a worker in the Mission during this time. Though she was handicapped in having only one hand, she gave herself diligently to visitation work and also to Sunday School work. Mother Wiens still found time to visit the sick and needy even though she had a large family. The older sisters did much of the sewing and cooking and Mary was nurse girl for the younger sisters, so that mother could do her work. Sometimes the beans would

be burnt for lack of attention, or the soup would be stew instead, but the children thrived in spite of simple foods.

Father often did the downtown shopping for the family. He would bring home crates of bargain fruits and smoked hams from the big department stores. The newspapers were watched for bargains in yard goods and hats. Two or three inexpensive hats could be bought at once and they would be sure to fit some of the seven sisters. When they didn't fit they could always be exchanged. Most of the summer and winter garments were home made and were not always too becoming —but then the sisters made up in pep and energy what was lacking in fancy clothes.

Katherine and Elizabeth had done very well in school. Already they had established a record of good grades in their studies. Katherine was selected to help the Principal in the office, but father decided to send her to Wheaton Academy. Elizabeth was the first one to graduate from the grades. It was considered a great occasion, but Mary had to remain with the younger sisters, so just a part of the family witnessed the first graduation in the family. Elizabeth started to attend Harrison High School in Chicago.

About this time there arose a dissension among the members of the Menn. Mission. Some of the members wanted a change of Pastors. Though father was a sincere and faithful Minister he was not as vigorous and dramatic as some wanted him to be. Some said the Wienses only knew how to pray. Well, our parents felt these criticisms very keenly, but they continued to serve where the Lord had placed them.

For some years the Schultz family had been living in Chicago too. Rev. Schultz was often engaged in Revival services which took him away from the city. Some of the members decided that they wanted to have Rev. Schultz as their Pastor. The rift between the two groups became very pronounced. There were some families that stuck tenaciously to father Wiens while others wanted a change. Finally the Board stepped in and asked Rev. Schultz to take over the work and they asked our folks to return to the farm. This our folks felt that they could not do. The Lord had called them to do Mission work and He had not relinquished them.

Father and mother were very brave during those trying days. There were a number of families that said that they would drop out of the Mission entirely if father and mother

left. Others said some very unkind things to our folks who had been very conscientious in their work. In the face of criticism they had very little to say. However of one thing they were certain—they could not leave the Work of the Lord, even though their support was cut off. The Lord woud see them through somehow, and they would trust in Him.

The family had a little money—enough to make a down payment on some property. There was a store arrangement at the front so that services could be held again and Sunday School started. However the strain was too much for father's sensitive nature and he fell sick for some time. It seemed a matter of nerves and of the heart. However our folks never wavered as to the wisdom of their choice—it was a "must" with them, "We must work the works of Him that sent us."

The girls were all eager for an education but now those hopes were shattered. Katherine had to leave Wheaton Academy and start to work at the Boston Store (Netcher) in the loop of Chicago. She took a position as shoe clerk in the Basement of the store. For some time she was the main support of the family. Later Elizabeth, after finishing two years of High School, started to work in the Employment Dept. of Sears Roebuck and Co., Mary started to work during the summer vacation when she was fourteen years of age. She went to the loop every day by street car. She worked as wrapper in the Boston Store. Of course the older sister was also working there. When school started she continued to work on Saturdays. When Mary was sixteen she too had to leave High School and seek for work. She started to work at Sears also and after a year she was transferred to the banking department of Sears Roebuck and Co.

In the meantime, Katherine had gone to Paxton, Nebraska, to teach school. Elizabeth and Mary remained at Sears Roebuck and Co. In order to pursue their studies, the girls started to attend evening classes at Moody Bible Institute. So on Tuesdays and Fridays they took the Street Car for Moody after working hours at Sears were over. Mother gave them each $.25 to buy supper as it was served for the Evening Students. Sometimes the girls would save their quarters for buying Christmas presents or Birthday gifts. Thus a small bag of candy or sugared peanuts served the purpose of supper. Sometimes the girls would walk along LaSalle St., softly singing "Praise God

1853323

from whom all blessings flow," as their "thank you" prayer to God, for the food.

The Sisters formed a quartette that sang quite often for the church services. Katherine sang tenor, Elisabeth alto, Mary soprano, and Martha sang bass. Mother dated Martha's bass voice to the time when she had bronchitis as a small child. Mother said that her voice always had been low after that. Sometimes the girls were asked to sing at the Christmas dinner at the Home Mission where Rev. Lehman was the Pastor. The girls often sang at Street meetings which were held at different intersections of Archer Ave. Occasionally Mary would be called on to sing a solo number. The girls often sang for sheer pleasure. Often they would sit on the box swing and sing all of the Gospel Songs which they could remember. Other times they would gather about the piano as Martha would play and they would spend a Sunday afternoon in singing. Sunday School teachers and friends or relatives from Moody Bible Institute would often remain for Sunday dinner and they would also join in these times of Inspirational Singing.

The services which had been started when the family moved to the new location were suspended after a while. The group that had come along with the folks decided to return to Brighton Mission, where the Menn. Mission was now located. A few could not be persuaded to return, among them being the Windts and the Hurlbuts. Some of this group went to the Presby. Church, while others dropped out entirely. It was felt best that our parents take a vacation and then start out with the people of the new neighborhood.

After about a year's time the Mission was opened again to the people of the neighborhood, Mother had done a good bit of visitation work and the first Sunday I think that there were about 16 besides our family. Our family numbered nine, so that helped out in the attendance. The number grew until there were 60 attending the Sunday School.

It was about this time that several Lithuenian brethren started to hold services in the hall at the Menn. Mission. These brethren also asked for assistance in their Open Air Meetings. The names of these gentlemen were Rev. Rodin and Rev. Vitulis. Members of the Wiens family would often go to assist them with the music and to play the little portable organ. By and by it became evident that their interest was more than just an interest in the work. However, the attraction was not

mutual and by and by the brethren found another location in which to work.

Many students came to the Menn. Bible Mission from time to time. Many students from the Moody Bible Institute would teach Sunday School in the afternoon and then remain for supper and the evening service. Students from Northwestern University in Evanston and nurses in training would also come to teach at the Mission, as well as to help in other phases of the work. John Thiessen from the Northwestern University often assisted in preaching as well as in teaching. For several years the Mission gave a Thanksgiving dinner for the students who were studying in Chicago and vicinity. At one dinner there were over eighty Menn. students present.

Rev. John Thiessen was very effective as a preacher and teacher at the Mission. He was also very impressive as a Young People's worker, but he was most impressive as suitor and lover. With his tall physique and cultured manner he won his way into the heart of Elizabeth, the second daughter of the family. The older daughter, Katherine, was at that time teaching school in Paxton, Nebr. John Thiessen had his heart set to go to India as a missionary. Of course that meant that Elizabeth would have to go far off to India. Mother said that she had secretly hoped that her children would not have to go to distant lands to serve Christ. Had not she and Papa Wiens been doing Mission work in Chicago? Would her children also be required to make sacrifices and go far away from home? Was not the Lord asking too much of her? However, after praying about the matter, she gave her verbal as well as her heart's consent.

The fourth of May, 1921 had been set as their wedding date. Elizabeth had informed her employers at Sears, ahead of time, and she was presented with a lovely traveling bag as her parting gift. To many folks in Chicago it seemed very romantic that Elizabeth should get so well educated a husband and then have the exciting experience of going to India. The family too thought of the present joy, putting off the thought of the departure of their sister to far distant lands.

After a simple but beautiful wedding service, the couple left for Kansas where John's relatives were preparing a more elaborate after wedding service, and celebration. For Sept. 21, a large tent was erected for the Ordination and Farewell of the Thiessens. Only mother and father were able to go to

Kansas for this occasion. By early fall the Thiessens were on their way to the Mission field in India.

Starting a Mission in a new neighborhood was no easy matter. At first the family of seven girls was quite an attraction in itself. Some of the rough boys from the neighborhood found this a nice place to try their pranks. Several times it became necessary to call the police officers to make order. By and by more adults began to attend in the evening and the roughnecks began to subside. The Buhle and Eggert families were among the first to come to the services. Mr. Buhle came to the services but did not accept Christ until years later, when he took sick with cancer. During the days of his illness, father would often go and visit him and he took Christ as his Saviour. Then the Bant family and the Schnell famly began to attend the services. For many years these families have attended the services and have also assisted in the work. Russel Schnell became interested in the Mission field in Africa, and is now a missionary there.

In the early stages of the work, there was quite a bit of enmity toward the work at the Mission. Of course the Gospel messages brought converts but they also made enemies. For some time the File family was living next door to the Mission, in the lower story of the Borchardt house. There she could hear all of the songs and a good part of the messages. It was evidently she who would write up the services in a most desplicable manner and send copies to those who were attending the services. It was her purpose to discredit the Mission. It was reported later that she went around to get signatures of people who wanted the Mission to be closed. Sometime later she became violently ill and died in a pitiful state, having no time to think of Christ.

During these years the Wiens family was getting no support from the Defenseless Menn. Brethren in Christ. They did however give permission to the churches to send their offerings, but few, if any made use of this privilege. Some of mother's relatives, especially those in Nebraska, sent offerings or personal gifts, occasionally. For several years, Mary was the only one in the family earning a salary. The offerings from the Mission were turned back into buying supplies for the Sunday School and D. V. B. S. Beside this one Sunday's offering per month was sent to foreign missionaries. However due to Mother Wiens's ingenuity, it was possible to make

ends meet and also to meet the monthly payments which were due on the house.

Many visitors and Missionaries came to Chicago from time to time. Many strangers found the Mission a good stopping place. Thus the family had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with many important people in the Menn. denomination. Missionaries who came from foreign countries found it a good place to stop. Mother was always happy to entertain them and to serve them some of the Menn. dishes to which they were accustomed. Home baked bread and delicious coffee were her specialties. Father spent many days showing visitors around the City of Chicago.

Before John Thiessen had made his way to India, he introduced John Neufeld to the Mission and the Wienses. John Neufeld took up studies at the Chicago Tech. Institute. He was particularly interested in architecture but he incidentally also became interested in the oldest daughter of the Wiens family, namely, Katherine. They were married in 1922.

In the early days, John Neufeld had helped in rebuilding for the Mission to the American Indians. Later he helped to rebuild the Bible Mission premises in Chicago. During the Depression years he sold eggs and remodeled Methodist Churches in the vicinity of Chicago. In more recent years he drew plans for some of the newer Mennonite Churches, one of which is Bethel Church in Mountain Lake, Minnesota. At present, he divides his time between Grace Mennonite Church and the Menn. Seminary of which he is the business manager.

Henry Toews had unobtrusively come to Chicago to assist John Neufeld in remodeling the Mission premises. He later entered into training at the Moody Bible Institute, graduating in Dec. 1927. In that same month and year he was married to Mary, the third daughter of the Wiens family. They later attended the Northern Baptist Theo. Seminary of Chicago. They started their studies at the Seminary, the year of the Depression, 1929. It was very difficult for students to find any kind of employment. However the Lord wonderfully supplied the needs of His children during that time. In 1936, they left for the Congo Inland Mission Field in Belgian Congo.

August Ewert made his appearance in Chicago during the time that Henry Toews was in Chicago. After attending Moody, he went to Wheaton College for two years, later getting his degree from Bethel College. This brother was not

blind to the feminine charms of the fourth daughter of the family. Martha won favor through her music as well as her looks. The piano seldom lacked a player when Martha was around. She was twenty-one years of age when she and August set their faces toward China. Their first term was especially long and difficult. At one time August was held for ransom for ten days. A few days after his release, their second child was born. The family was separated when the General Conference ordered women and children to return to U. S. A. during the war. Martha and five children returned to America, as by order of the Conference. Shortly before the war with Japan was declared, August returned to U. S. A., also. The Ewerts are now engaged in work at Grace Bible Institute. Mr. Ewert was in the group of the Founders of Grace Bible Institute.

It was in 1937, that Papa Wiens was starting out in George Dick's car to attend a prayer meeting. At times his heart had been bothering him somewhat, but he was in seemingly fair health, at this time. He had no sooner stepped into the car and seated himself beside the driver, George Dick, that his head fell back and he was gone. Loving hands carried him to the living room upstairs and the Doctor was called. The Doctor said that he had died instantly. The lines of care disappeared from his face and there was a smile of serenity, which those who saw it, will never forget. He had served his Master faithfully to the very end, having been in Mission work for over thirty years.

John Neufeld, who had been assisting in the work of the Menn. Bible Mission for many years, now took full charge of the work. The moving of the Spirit of God was especially felt after father's death. There seemed to be renewed interest in Spiritual things among the members and the people of the neighborhood. Sometime later the General Conference took over the work of the Menn. Bible Mission and assisted in the financial support of the work there.

George Dick dates his interest in Helene, the fifth lady of the family, to the event of father's death. Geo. Dick had graduated from Fletcher College and was attending the Northern Baptist Theo. Seminary. Helene was also a student at the Seminary. She was working for a degree in Religious Education.

Papa Wiens had performed the marriage ceremonies for the first four daughters of the family, but now he was gone. John Neufeld, who had taken over the work of the Mission, performed the ceremony for George and Helene. Soon after this the Dicks took over the work of the First Menn. Church of Lima, Ohio. At this writing they are busy with the General Conference Church at Bloomfield, Montana, and are incidentally training seven little Dicks in the art of being good Mennonites.

Sara Mae finished her studies at the Menn. Seminary in 1950, receiving a degree of Master of Religious Education. For years, she has given her time and talent to the work of the Gospel Girls' Choir at the Menn. Bible Mission, which is now Grace Mennonite Church. This group of girls has done some lovely singing at the Mission as well as at various churches and on the radio over the Noon Day Services in the loop of Chicago.

The youngest daughter, Esther, is an instructor at the Berean Academy at Elbing, Kansas. For many years she has instructed various teachers' training groups at the Mission in Chicago.

Several of the grand children of Papa Wiens are already setting their faces toward Christian work or to the Mission field. Esther Neufeld has already gone to Puerto Rico as a teacher in a Mission Training School. Eleanor Thiessen, who was chosen as the No. 1 nurse of Kansas in 1949, is setting her face toward India. Harold Thiessen who received his training at Bluffton College and the Menn. Seminary, is serving a Menn. Church in Middleberry, Ind. He serves with his violin as well as with his Bible. Arthur Thiessen who has completed his medical training at Illinois Medical College, is contemplating work in India. Two grand children, Irene and Ralph Ewert have or are completing their studies in Grace Bible Institute. Three grand children, Ernest Neufeld, Paul Toews and Helen Neufeld are attending college in preparation for some type of Christian service. Dr. Elvina Neufeld is contemplating work in Africa, under the Congo Inland Mission.

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